

## Book reviews

**ADVANCES IN MANAGEMENT EDUCATION**, John Beck and Charles Cox (Eds), Wiley, Chichester, 1980. No. of pages: 355. Price: £15.90/\$47.50. ISBN 0 471 27775 4.

This book is a most informative and interesting compilation of articles on management education. As is true of most conference proceedings, there is a mix of perspectives that does not lead to a fully integrated picture. However, there are clusters, as well as individual articles, that should be useful to designers of management education and scholarly researchers.

Cooper reviews his and others' research on the stressors and satisficers in the quality of managerial life, a context which the other papers only indirectly address. Reynolds suggests that the inability of education to facilitate learning about democratic structures appears to be because much of it contains a 'hidden curriculum', namely, the processes in which the teacher and student are involved are too often more congruent with authoritarian structures. Reynolds then describes an executive programme in a large engineering company that not only presents an example of how the hidden curriculum can be made more congruent with democratic ideals increasingly promulgated in Europe but shows how education must confront existing socialization processes and generate 'liberating' cultures. Keslake and Radcliff describe another management programme where the managers were helped to become more aware and less inwardly conflicted. They present an interesting model of how 'inward bound' education leads to new 'outward bound' consequences. Kim James shows how instruments can be redesigned when they are too restrictive, which leads to generating data that question existing theories of human learning. Jackson and Vant illustrate new methods for identifying training needs by utilizing a theory that helps them to reconceptualize features of problem solving and decision making. McGivering describes new ways of evaluating learning effectiveness that go beyond satisfaction ratings and, at the same time, relate their work to role theory. These chapters illustrate that there exists a group of scholars who are able to be reflective practitioners, who conduct empirical research that permits them to learn to be more effective in their practice and to generate theories about their practice as well as to raise important questions about existing theory.

Another cluster represents thoughtful analytical essays. For example, John Morris examines six models of learning in such a way that the reader not only understands their core concepts but also the core gaps as well as some of the key questions that must be examined in management education. Pedler and Boydell argue that most executive development programmes are systematic in the sense that they strive to avoid confusion and surprise in order to be incremental. But the features that they avoid in 'running a smooth shop' (surprise, uncertainty) may be key competences for executives to develop.

Another cluster of thoughtful papers reports experience in the 'Action Learning' (Boddy, Burgoyne and Cunningham) begun by Revans. The underlying theory of instruction is to require individuals to enter foreign organizational contexts and diagnose problems that are exemplars of most organizations, and report to the management of the firm.

There is also a cluster of interesting papers by Smith, Beck, Boot and Boxer that utilize Kelley's construct theory and repertory grid in ways that add to the theory and simultaneously inform practice. Finally, there is also a cluster of interesting papers on transactional analyses (Cox and Cox), evaluation (Brewster), transfer of learning (Casey, Binsted, Stuart and Long).

Management education appears to be alive and well, at least as practiced by the participants of this conference.

CHRIS ARGYRIS  
*Harvard University*